

APPROVED 01/28/2010

At 6:05 pm the Board's meeting was called to order in the basement meeting room of the Fremont Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Greta St Germain, Donald Gates Jr, and Brett Hunter; and Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

St Germain circulated the first draft of the Selectmen's Annual Report, which Gates and Hunter reviewed. There was discussion about the report and many additional ideas generated. Carlson will insert the discussion items and send out another draft to be finalized next week.

Selectmen reviewed the February Newsletter. Additions to this for press time will include the names of any candidates for Town or School District office (as declared by the closing of the sign-ups on January 29, 2010); and brief notes about any changes to the warrant items from the Deliberative Session. The Town Clerk also submitted additional information that will be included if space permits.

There was discussion about the minutes of 05 January 2010 and a section added in an edit by St Germain. Carlson was concerned about the portion added about "manipulation" of dates for the Accounts Payable manifest. After some discussion, it was decided to explain the full process of how invoices for one year are received into January of the new year, and that bills are paid on the prior year invoices until the 10th of the month.

St Germain moved to approve the minutes of 05 January 2010 as amended. Gates second and the motion passed 3-0.

Selectmen then reviewed the minutes for 14 January 2010.

There was discussion about accessibility of the Board's minutes and it was clarified that the right-to-know law indicates that minutes have to be made available within a certain period of time following the meeting, even if they are in draft form prior to the Board having reviewed them.

Gates moved to approve the minutes for 14 January 2010. Hunter seconded and the vote to approve the minutes was 2-0-1 with St Germain abstaining as she was not at that meeting.

Chief Janvrin came in to the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Janvrin presented the Town's Hiring Policy as prepared for use by the emergency services several years ago. He said he had the document out because he is currently doing a hiring process. He noted that former Department Heads (prior to the combination of Fire and Rescue) had signed the document and that he had updated the signature page so that Fire Chief Richard Butler could be added to it.

There was discussion about the misdemeanor provisions of the Policy. There was also discussion about other components, by way of explanation.

Selectmen signed the updated signature page and it will be redistributed.

Tax Collector Annmarie Scribner came into the meeting at 7:10 pm. She said she was here to clear up some items with the Board. She said she is not running for Tax Collector in March. The first concern she had was that she had heard complaints and grumblings about the office hours for the Tax Collector's Office.

She indicated that her office was not open in the afternoon on the day prior to taxes being due, but stated that the hours for the Tax Collection season were posted on the web and in the Newsletter. She said that

the office had not been posted to be open on Tuesday December 1, except from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. She explained that December 1st she had three meetings at her full-time job and could not be here. The Deputy Tax Collector Lori Holmes had planned to be in the office during the day, even though it was not posted. Her sister-in-law's mother had died and she had to attend a funeral.

Scribner said she was here that evening for the posted hours. The Selectmen's Office and the Deputy Town Clerk had taken payments during the day, and she appreciated that, understanding that everyone is busy. She said she had heard some concerns expressed about people having to help out in this regard, but said that she thought we were a small enough town that we could all still do that for one another.

It was clarified that all the hours were not on tax bills (the old hours of Thursdays 6-8 pm were on the tax bills). She felt everyone knew the hours based on the postings.

Scribner again apologized for not being open that day as circumstances just worked against them. She said taxes were collected and deposited as per the normal schedule. She said she had also thanked everyone involved in assisting during that busy time.

The second thing she said she had heard concerns about telephone calls in the Tax Collector's Office. She said that only a few times in the past few years has the voicemail box filled up and said that someone checks the messages almost daily. She suggested an additional phone line should be installed strictly for the Tax Office. There was discussion about staff not answering the phone, but Carlson explained that the Selectmen's Office has always answered calls while the office is open because most people do not like the automated voicemail option. Scribner said it is not her intention to have anyone perform additional work.

Scribner's third comment related to the combination of the Town Clerk Tax Collector's positions. She said that she was troubled that no one came to talk to her about combining the positions and the amount of work there is in the Tax Collector's Office. She feels she should have been asked.

Scribner said that no one knows the nights or weekends she works, or what she might do from home. Currently the Deputy only takes calls, writes receipts and accepts payments, and knows how to look up information in the tax computer. Scribner said there is much more to the job than that.

St Germain said that she is the petitioner and that Scribner had said to her previously that she was not going to run, and was planning to run for Selectman. Scribner said that she told the Board earlier that if it went to twice per year billing that she would not be able to keep the position.

At that time, St Germain had asked Scribner about hours of work, and St Germain stated Scribner's position was that it is 6-7 hours a week in general, and 40 hours a week in the busy season.

St Germain said the receipts are down, and this is a perfect time to address the bi-annual tax issues, work out the kinks and use the coming year to do that. St Germain said Lori Holmes had concerns about the people involved (3 currently) and the fact that the Town is not growing due to the economy.

Scribner said she did not think there was a problem combining the offices, but felt the amount of work needed to be considered. It is more than 6 hours a week during tax time and there will not be time to do it all (when considering the Clerk's Office workload as well).

Scribner said that the reported hours for the Deputy were going to decrease (as compared to the total now); and she was not sure that would be sufficient to keep up in the busy season.

Scribner said she sees it as 4 positions going down to 2, and said kudos to St Germain for doing the research and looking into it. St Germain said that she looked at it as a time to hone down on what the fiscal needs were.

Scribner expressed concern about the time it would take to get all the work of both offices done, indicating that she thought other towns have larger staffs. St Germain said she had looked into towns the same size as Fremont.

Gates said that the Board should have had a discussion with the Collector and said the Board owns that one. Gates said he spoke about the complexity of both positions at the public budget hearing and that this is an elected position and anyone can run, feeling that a deputy could be a key component to the office running smoothly.

Gates spoke to the tax day opening and said that not everyone knew, because he did not know either, and felt the office should have been open more at the end dates (of taxes being due).

There was further discussion about those lessons learned.

St Germain said that the combination could provide the residents with somebody here every day that can answer their questions. She thought that in going to bi-annual taxes, that there would be more questions than in past years.

Scribner said that during the collection season, it is very busy. Every payment needs to be recorded in the computer, logged on a deposit, and daily bookkeeping needs to be done.

Gates said with regard to the combined system, we have gone to the automated registration systems and that is supposed to free up man-hours.

Gates apologized to Scribner for the Selectmen's Office not having sat down and talked with her about the combination issue in the beginning.

St Germain personally apologized to Scribner as well.

The Board thanked her for speaking so candidly with them. Scribner left the meeting at 7:35 pm.

Chief Janvrin continued with the discussion on the hiring process. He said for the current posting (one full-time temporary and one part-time position) that he had 49 applicants; with 24 showing up on Saturday January 16th for the physical test, written test, and partial psychological profile. He said the candidates are now down to eight awaiting oral boards.

Gates recommended that Janvrin consider adding the Fire Chief and Selectman St Germain to the process for the oral boards. They will be held on Tuesday February 2 and Thursday February 4. Janvrin said he would take it under advisement.

Janvrin then talked about his arrangement with the SPCA for animal control matters. He has now been asked by the SPCA to enter into a contract with them. The contract is set up as a fee per animal for different services. Using the numbers of what animals were taken there in 2009, he can cover the estimated amount within current the Animal Control budget.

Janvrin recommended the Town enter into the contract with the SPCA. St Germain moved to enter into the contract and Hunter seconded. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Janvrin said the last thing he wanted to talk about was the Police Special Detail pay rate. He said that his officers are refusing details in Fremont to work in other towns where the pay rate is higher. Janvrin presented data on what detail rates are in other towns. This included:

Area Detail Rates

Town	Officer Paid	Administrative	Cruiser Rental	Total
Brentwood	\$37.50	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$59.50
Chester	\$35.00	\$7.00	\$8.00	\$50.00
Danville	\$36.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$56.00
East Kingston	\$35.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$51.00
Epping	\$39.00	\$11.70	\$15.00	\$65.70
Epping Town Rate	\$27.50	\$0	\$0	\$27.50
Kingston	\$36.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$56.00
Raymond	\$35.00	\$7.00	\$8.00	\$50.00
Raymond if OT rate is higher	Rate	\$7.00	\$8.00	
Sandown	\$33.00	\$11.43	\$6.00	\$50.43
Fremont	\$31.00	\$9.00	\$7.00	\$47.00

Selectmen said they were willing to go to \$36.00 and considered that this is what is proposed in the draft contract, which has been proposed by the Teamsters.

The Board agreed this would bring us in closer comparison to other towns.

Janvrin also advised the Board that he had backed out of the race for Rockingham County Sheriff.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the payroll manifest \$20,792.36 and accounts payable manifest \$33,891.19 for the current week dated 01/22/2010. Motion was made by Hunter and seconded by St Germain to approve the accounts payable manifest in the amount of \$33,891.19. The vote was approved 3-0. Hunter then moved to approve the payroll manifest in the amount of \$20,792.36. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

2. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the final information received from Thom Roy regarding the Sunny Lane RFP for building demolition. The follow-up information was that the low bid did include removal of everything including the travel trailer on the site. The bid will be awarded to Ty Bolduc for the sum of \$1,700 for removal and removal of everything on site, and site regarding. Carlson will follow-up with a letter and acquisition of the necessary insurance form.

2. Carlson reported back information from the Energy Committee, along with an email from Bob Larson, regarding the energy grant (stimulus money) process. The Committee has submitted other Letters of Intent (LOI) for projects including an additional 3,000 watts of photovoltaic and install solar hot water heater at the Safety Complex; a site energy efficiency evaluation and installation of combined heat and power system at Ellis School.

A question has also arisen with regard to the LOI that Thom Roy submitted for the Town Hall renovations in that the geothermal system may not qualify for the grant. He has posed the question to the

Board regarding a propane heating system in the Town Hall. The original estimates for the Town Hall renovations included propane, and a second estimate was received for geothermal. The Town Hall is not enough of an energy-user to meet the upgrade standards.

The Board discussed this and felt that obtaining a grant was a great concept for the Town, and that the heating system was not set in stone.

3. The Board discussed final plans for meeting with Jack Barnes on Friday in Concord. St Germain is able to go and will likely arrive at the DRA offices. Hunter will try to go but is not sure he can leave work.

4. Carlson shared an email dated January 20th from Jeff Padellaro of the Teamsters regarding dates for negotiating, indicating he wanted to begin at 9:00 am. Selectmen discussed the meeting held over the summer with Richard Laughton, during which it was discussed that the Board are all working people and the designated time for their meetings is Thursday evening.

The Board directed Carlson to get back to Padellaro with that information and suggest that a meeting be set up for 6:00 pm on Thursday February 25th. The Board also asked to have the Town's Attorney present for the first session, when it is confirmed.

5. The Board reviewed the cover of the Annual Town Report for 2010 with the photograph provided by Allie Burke, of the Fire Rescue Department from the May 30th Retirement Open House for Dick Heselton.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

3. Selectmen reviewed and signed outgoing correspondence including a letter to the NH Public Employee Labor Relations Board (PELRB) with the Town's annual budget submission date. This is in response to an email request from the PELRB.

4. The Energy Committee submitted for Selectmen's review two proposals for the installation of the solar panel array install at the Fremont Safety Complex. The proposals were based on information provided by Bob Larson to both vendors. A third proposal was for some \$30,000 and was not considered given the Town's \$3,500 in currently received grants to complete the work. The two viable quotes were from Freedom Renewable at \$3,000 and Seacoast Energy Alternatives at \$3,567.32.

The Energy Committee's recommendation was to go with the Freedom Renewable quote at \$3,500 because it actually included more than the other quote. The Committee has \$3,500 currently in the Energy Fund from two grants received.

Selectmen reviewed the quotes and supported the Committee's choice of Freedom Renewable.

The Energy Committee meets next on Saturday 23 January 2010 at 9:00 am to continue their work on this project.

5. Selectmen reviewed a pie chart prepared by the Treasurer as an addendum to her annual Town Report, based on a sample that St Germain had obtained from another town. The Board felt that the repayment of the tax anticipation note skewed the numbers because it is not an expense (only the interest in an expense); but repayment of a loan. The Board also thought the reference to "stale checks and adjustments" should just be referenced as "adjustments." This information will be shared with the Treasurer.

6. Carlson reported that Guerwood Holmes had called on Monday regarding Gates Lane. Holmes said he had been contacted by Bob Maslowski about the status of Gates Lane, indicating that he (Maslowski) was not going to plow the road any more.

Gates said that since December 1957, the Town had plowed road. He estimated that Maslowski had started doing it in about 1975. Gates said from that point on, Maslowski plowed it initially, and the Town would go down with the wing, and would also sand it.

With this as practice for the past 30 years, Selectmen felt that the status should be checked, but that the Town was likely responsible for the road. Review of the Town's file will be done and presented at the meeting next week.

7. Selectmen received a letter from Tom Avallone of Datchet Development in response to Jeanne Nygren's letter of request for payment on winter maintenance fees (January to March 2010) for Risloves Way. In his letter, Mr Avallone indicates that Datchet is out of funds and unable to secure any additional funding until one of the remaining two units in the development sells. Avallone requested that the Town draw down on the \$25,000 cash portion of the \$50,000 two year road maintenance bond that is in place to cover the \$3,192 due for the January to March 2010 winter months.

Selectmen considered this and asked Carlson to contact the Association Board within the Development to inquire as to the status. The Board was not opposed to withdrawing escrowed funds, noting that a fee for same would be charged, as well as that the money needed to be returned to the escrow account by the Developer by a date certain, to remain in compliance with the Town's regulations.

8. Selectmen reviewed the February Newsletter. It will be updated to include the candidates running for Town and School District offices, as well as information on where to get any updates from Deliberative Session to the Official Ballot. The Board approved the draft as presented. Additional information articles were reviewed as well, which will be used if space permits once the balance of Town/School Meeting information has been included.

9. The Board reviewed an audit confirmation letter from the Mercier Group. Mercier is planning to be here in April 2010 to do the 2009 audit. Selectmen reviewed the confirmation letter and designated Gates to sign it.

10. St Germain had asked for contractor insurance certificates to be available at the meeting. She reviewed the binder. St Germain indicated that she had set up a meeting next week with Primex at 6:00 pm to review the Town's insurance and other requirements.

11. St Germain asked about progress on the General Ledger program. Carlson advised she had spoken with the software company, but with someone who was not fully experienced in it. That tech had advised that offsetting entries need to be done to get the ledger balances back to zero. In response to additional questions, Carlson will contact someone else who had trained her and Jeanne Nygren this summer on the updates to the programs.

12. Selectmen reviewed a notice from the Raymond Animal Hospital regarding an Open House on February 3, 2010 for posting and placement on Channel 22. The Board reviewed the guidelines and decided that the notice could be posted, but that the notice did not meet the Channel 22 criteria for non-profit organizations. They did approve a notice being placed on the Town Hall bulletin board.

13. Selectmen reviewed a first draft of the Purchasing Policy presented by St Germain. There was also discussion about a Fraud Policy. St Germain referenced sample policies (for Fraud) from Dover and Goffstown, which Carlson will attempt to get.

There was discussion about the purchasing levels, and the Board's meeting minutes from a few weeks ago will be referenced for the thresholds, to be inserted in Section VII Purchase Levels. There were other discussions and amendments made, which will be inserted with another draft circulated.

14. There was a lengthy discussion about the goals the Board has and the projects that are ongoing, including the Purchasing Policy, a Fraud Policy, and the Highway Study Committee. There were differing opinions shared about what is important for the Board to work on, and what progress has or has not been made in the past year.

Following this discussion, it was decided that the Purchasing Policy would be worked on for next week, to complete it for distribution.

NEXT WEEK

The Budget Committee meets on Wednesday January 27, 2010. The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Thursday January 28, 2010 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Gates to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 pm. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator